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ABSTRACT

This report is the third of three documents designed to provide information concerning the student at Stony Brook. The attitudes and activities of the Stony Brook Student Affairs Professional Staff is discussed in relation to background and preparation for student affairs work, orientation and adaptation to Stony Brook, educational policy and staff attitudes, and professional staff roles. Recommendations and conclusions are included. Related documents are HE 004 269 and HE 004 270. (MJM)

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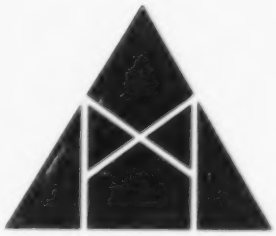

Group for Human Development
and Educational Policy

1973
Report No. 3

THE STONY BROOK STUDENT AFFAIRS PROFESSIONAL STAFF: ATTITUDES AND ACTIVITIES

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The Group for Research on Human Development and Educational Policy was formed in 1971 to conduct studies of Stony Brook students, faculty, and services as a base for planning improvements in the programs and the overall quality of life at the University. In 1971-72 the Group conducted studies of the academic, psychological, and social characteristics of Stony Brook students, student services, the residential program, policies and practices of faculty and student affairs staff. These studies will be reported in three papers of which this is the third. During 1972-73 the Group is continuing its studies of student characteristics and the residential program. In addition, it is undertaking studies of human destructiveness, research on faculty experiences and satisfactions with new roles, inquiries into the special problems of commuters, transfer students, and minority students, and examinations of the special problems of graduate education and classroom communication.

The senior staff consists of: Joseph Katz, Director; James Bess, and David Tilley, with secretarial assistance provided by Gerri Byrnes and Joan Vogelle.

Graduate students who are currently associated with the Group are: Andrew Baum, Denise Cronin, Paul Hopstock, Richard LaFemina, Jack Pogany, Robert Sell and Ross Vasta. Richard Kinane, a recent graduate of Stony Brook, also is associated with the Group currently. During the summer of 1972 the following students were associated with the Group: Michael Graham, Paul Hopstock, Scott Klippel, Leonard Rubin and Raymond Westwater. Anthony Frosolone has served as computer programmer. Andris Grunde joined the Group in November 1972 as a staff associate. Many undergraduates assisted in the work of the Group, with special help having been given by Ann Crawford, Angela Fasano, Lynda Lieberman, Susan Morse and Emelia Richichi. Reports are prepared by the senior staff, circulated among the Group, but do not in every item reflect each member's individual point of view.

Permission to quote any and all parts of this report is given provided that the authors (James L. Bess, Joseph Katz and David C. Tilley) and the Research Group for Human Development are identified.

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Introduction

The following report on student affairs professional staff at Stony Brook is the third in a series prepared by the Research Group for Human Development and Educational Policy. Earlier reports discussed student life at Stony Brook and the faculty. These reports are based on extensive data collected by the Research Group over the past year. They are intended to stimulate discussion and to help bring about improvement in the quality of life at Stony Brook.

Data for this study derive primarily from a nineteen-page questionnaire administered to members of the student affairs professional staff in the spring of 1972. Over half of the staff completed the questionnaire with at least twenty-five percent participation from each student affairs office. The offices included in the study are: Admissions, Financial Aid, Guidance Services, Housing, International Students Office, Psychological Services, Registrar, Residential Advisers and Vice-Presidents office. The majority of non-respondents were those not planning to return to their positions or those who left during the data collecting period. A review of these non-respondents established that response bias was not a factor. In addition, information gathered for companion studies on students and faculty, particularly data on student use of institutional services, has been used.

Context

Many concerns expressed by Stony Brook staff are shared by professional colleagues elsewhere. For example, in a recent eighty-six institution study of student affairs budget support undertaken by a member of the Research Group it was found that many student affairs staffs experienced difficulty in their efforts to secure sufficient support for educational and developmental student affairs programs. Similarly, other national studies have shown that student affairs staff members often find that their interests in serving the personal growth needs of students are blocked by institutional demands on staff for service to the academic program, for support of institutional administration and for the maintenance of campus order and control. These conflicts have created a sense of frustration among student affairs professionals who feel misunderstood and underutilized. Many in student affairs seriously wonder if Professor Max Wise might not be right when he declared recently that the student personnel profession "may be at the point of irrelevancy."

Part of the dilemma facing student affairs professionals derives from student affairs being at a point of transition between old and new functions. Just a decade

ago the dean of students of a large university speaking before a national conference at the close of his year as president of that group proudly characterized the student personnel profession as the "academic civil service." Few would be comfortable with that definition in 1973. He was, however, describing a time now almost past when many deans of students exercised unprecedented control over student life on their campuses by serving as efficient, and contented, executors of the campus status quo. Today many, if not most, student affairs professionals chafe in roles that define them as playing subordinate, non-policy, and essentially administrative controlling functions. These professionals are quick to assert that intellectual development and psychosocial growth are essential, coordinate and interactive processes. The efforts of student affairs programs, however, to assume these educational functions and to claim professional status equal to the faculty has met steady resistance not only by faculty, but also by those reluctant to see an end to *in loco parentis* and the exercise of strong controls over student life.

Earl A. Kaile, Professor of Educational Psychology at the University of Texas, states the faculty's opposition concisely. "My view is that there is no defined body of knowledge, skills, and ethics of professional practice for student personnel work as a whole that would constitute the basis for a profession. Many functions in the area are not unique, in that they fall within other professions and occupations. Goals and functions are defined to a considerable extent by each institution rather than by a professional association." This belief that student affairs lacks an intellectual, theoretical basis, and by extention that its practitioners lack professional credentials equivalent to those of the faculty, describes much of the rationale for the current reluctance of faculty to accept student affairs professionals as professional peers and colleagues in educational governance.

Student affairs as a professional activity is still at an early stage of development. It does face new problems in defining its standards and ethics. In its earliest American forms student affairs functions usually were performed by campus religious leaders who drew their standards and ethics quite comfortably from religious orthodoxy. With the decline of religious influences in higher education early in the nineteenth century, deans who were more identified with scholarship than religious values emerged to administer institutional academic and moral standards. In these roles the dean served as the president's alter-ego. The era of academic specialization that accompanied increased secularization of colleges resulted in the appointment at Harvard College in 1890 (the same year as the massacre at Wounded Knee) of the first college officer excusively responsible for student affairs: The Dean of Men.

Given the combined force at that time of the acceptance of *in loco parentis*, the homogeneity of college student populations and the existence of a strong campus oriented student culture, there was little questioning of the appropriateness of the "controlling" role of the dean of men. The dramatic changes in higher

education following World War II, however, initiated by the G.I. Bill, the increased reliance on college for vocational credentialing, and the movement in the 1960's toward universal higher education transformed the campus "culture", rendering archaic much of the traditional student affairs dean's role and introducing less paternal and more professional functions.

Thus until the 1950's student affairs was a relatively clear and stable function comfortably reinforcing generally accepted community and campus values. As student populations grew larger and more diverse, and faculty limited themselves to their scholarly interests, student affairs accumulated new and more complex professional functions. At the same time the traditional "collegiate" student social culture began to deteriorate. The interests of students turned outward to re-thinking values and the making of a "new" society better able to deal with war, hypocrisy, racial injustice, poverty, and the exploitation of natural resources. Student affairs deans increasingly found themselves spread-eagled between their traditional role (President's alter-ego for discipline and moral supervision) and their emerging professional role of being "relevant" to the developmental needs of students in the context of a new cultural milieu. Institutions, however, have been slow to understand both that the passing of the traditional campus culture has substantially reduced the scope of institutional control over the non-academic life of students and that the shift in the student culture to real-life concerns has created dramatic new needs for educational and personal services.

This report on the student affairs staff at Stony Brook, therefore, comes at a particularly critical and interesting moment in the evolution of the student affairs profession. Higher education has moved through a period of historically unprecedented scholarly and physical growth. A college education is an accessible goal now for more people in the United States than ever before. Developing programs of free access enrollment, universities without walls, external degree possibilities and expanded continuing education programs suggest that there are new roles for faculty and professional staff in this emerging society. As we examine the attitudes and activities of student affairs staff at Stony Brook we will be curious to see how one staff and institution perceive and respond to this challenge for change.

Background and Preparation for Student Affairs Work

In many respects the backgrounds of student affairs staff at Stony Brook reflect the influence of the "Great American Dream." They come from families with solid middle-class work orientations. Forty percent report the principal wage earner in their family while they were growing up to have been in business; half of these were self-employed. A quarter are identified as skilled or semi-skilled workers. Fifteen percent taught in colleges or universities and the remainder were in

occupations such as farming, banking, publishing, communications, and engineering. Fewer than ten percent worked as state or federal government employees. We are struck by the relatively high incidence of parents in occupations involving individual effort. When occupations such as self-employed businessman, farmer, teacher and skilled worker were combined, we found this group comprised almost two-thirds of parent occupations. We were further interested to discover that when we looked at the families of those staff whose efforts are devoted primarily to helping students (counseling, advising), as opposed to performing administrative functions, (managing and record keeping) over seventy percent of these parents were in the cluster of occupations requiring individual effort. We will return to this finding later as its influence on staff behavior and attitudes toward higher education emerges.

Consistent with the traditional ideals for social mobility characteristic of American middle class families, most student affairs staff members have surpassed their parents in both educational level and occupational status. In this we see the influence of parent values supporting education, industry, and individualism. In their formal educations most of the parents are quite unlike their children. Half of the fathers and almost two-thirds of the mothers completed a high school diploma or less. Those parents who went on beyond high school, however, revealed remarkable persistence, particularly the fathers. Two-thirds of the fathers and one-half of the mothers who went on to college completed a bachelor's degree. Almost half of the fathers who completed a bachelor's degree (slightly more than a third) went on to complete a post graduate degree (M.S., J.D., Ph.D.). Almost a fourth of the mothers earned a bachelor's degree, but less than ten percent of these continued their studies.

Our investigation revealed that the parents of staff in helping roles (those who advise, assist and counsel students directly more than half their working time) tended to have less formal education than the parents of staff in administrative position (those who primarily manage records or facilities). The parents of administrators were more than twice as likely to have completed at least high school. On the other hand, staff in helping roles tended to have as much, if not more, education than administrative staff, be more interested in continuing their education and to have married someone with as much or more education than themselves; a quarter of administrator spouses have a degree beyond the bachelor's compared to half of the helper spouces. Twelve percent of spouses (all male) in our sample had an earned or almost earned a Ph.D. suggesting that for some staff supporting spouses through graduate school was a motive for their working at Stony Brook.

With regard to their own education, half of the staff report that they are actively continuing or planning to continue their studies. Two thirds have completed at least a master's degree. One quarter say they have not gone beyond the bachelor's. Only four percent of our sample indicated a doctorate. Half of the women in our study gave their highest degree as the bachelor's compared to one fifth of the men.

Of those planning to continue their education, only one third of the administrators are included contrasted with four-fifths of the helping staff. Virtually no women in administrative functions indicate plans for further study. Only half of those going on with their studies say they are pursuing a program related to their current work. Three-quarters of the women show study plans in an unrelated field. Most of those continuing their studies are enrolled at Stony Brook, several in Health Sciences programs. Those interested in continuing their studies, but as yet have not started, cite the lack of suitable study opportunities at or near Stony Brook. Typically, these are staff interested in further professional training in higher education and student personnel services.

Unlike some professions such as medicine, law, and teaching which usually are chosen during undergraduate days or before in order to guide educational planning, student affairs staff at Stony Brook appear to have made their current occupational decision later in life, typically in their mid-twenties (somewhat earlier for men than women). Often the decision was facilitated by an opportunity for obtaining immediate employment rather than as a part of deliberate educational or career planning. Over one-third came to student affairs from other occupations, often teaching in secondary schools. They describe their motivation for working in student affairs as a combination of desire to be in a university setting and to "help people."

Some background characteristics of staff are distinct compared to other groups at Stony Brook. In religious orientation, for example, student affairs staff report their preferences as forty percent Protestant, eighteen percent Catholic, nine percent Jewish, six percent "other" and twenty-eight percent "none." As earlier reports of the Research Group show, the student body presents virtually a reverse image of these proportions. The difference, however, becomes more pronounced when the student affairs staff is partitioned and analyzed by helping staff and administrators. Among the administrators the percentage of Jewish members drops to four percent and "none" to twenty percent. Helping staff, however, consist of twenty percent Jewish and forty percent "none." In this respect helping staff are more like students and faculty than their administrator colleagues.

Most male staff members are married (85%) and have one or more dependent children (75%). By contrast, only a third of the women staff members are married. None of the women report dependent children, although several indicate grown children who are no longer dependent.

Staff range in age from recent college graduates in their early twenties to those nearing retirement age. The majority, however, are in their late twenties and early thirties, clustering tightly around an average staff age of thirty-one. Few have been in the field for more than ten years, most less than five. In these characteristics the Stony Brook staff corresponds closely to student affairs staffs nationally. A study of ten institutions showed student affairs staff members to have a median age of thirty-one and to have been in the field an average of four years.

At the time of their first appointment to a student affairs function at Stony Brook virtually all staff were entering their first full-time student affairs position. Previously some had had analagous experience in the Peace Corps, teaching, religious or social work. Only a minority of the staff came to their new duties with significant professional preparation in student affairs work or training for service in higher education generally. Those few in our sample with a doctorate are in departments such as Psychological Services and the Mental Health Service where professional standards related to these specialized disciplines make such credentials expected.

Although few student affairs staff members decided on entering this field while still in college, and their studies therefore were not planned with this occupation in mind, most find their formal education useful in their present job. Ninety percent of those in helping roles rated their education of great use compared to forty-seven percent of the administrators. While our overall finding is consistent with national studies, the satisfaction of administrators at Stony Brook with their formal education does fall below a national figure of sixty-eight percent.

Student affairs staff, we find, are the sons, and much less likely, the daughters of middle America. In the majority of cases they are the first generation in their family to go to college, and the first generation to aspire to professional status. There is much evidence of parental influence, particularly in the importance of getting ahead through education and one's own efforts. Values are often rooted in formal religious affiliations, usually Protestant. (Almost three-quarters still claim to be "active" in their religion.) They are young and just starting their careers, although for some, student affairs is already a change from an earlier occupation. Many have experienced directly as students the educational and social changes of the 1960's. They come to their work expressing a "concern" for students and a desire to help shape a better educational environment for them, but with little professional training or experience. Student affairs staff bring to the university, however, the compensating strength of their idealism and optimism, together with a refreshing sense of excitement about higher education's significance in the lives of individual students.

Orientation and Adaptation to Stony Brook

Staff indicate that they expected to find at the university a good environment in which to work and grow. They believed there would be many able students, especially at the graduate level, the challenge of shaping a new university, a high quality of leadership in both student affairs and the university as a whole, high quality in their professional colleagues, many cultural opportunities and, overall, a high sense of community. These expectations, although optimistic, were below what staff felt would be ideal, hence may not be attributed to the naivety of enthusiastic young people entering their first student affairs job.

After arrival at Stony Brook professional staff find that while some of their expectations are realized, most are not. The quality of graduate students is reported as good as staff members expected, as is the quality of their immediate supervisor. They are pleased to discover a surprisingly high degree of freedom to exercise professional judgement. Little else about Stony Brook, however, is as was hoped. The most profound disappointments for most are the lack of a sense of campus community, the absence of many hard working and motivated undergraduates, the unassertiveness of institutional leadership and not finding an opportunity to participate in the challenge of shaping a new university.

Despite their general disillusionment with Stony Brook most staff reported that they were reasonably satisfied with their specific position, although not their salary. Most felt salaries to be well below what they should be, although they acknowledged that compensation elsewhere was no better. Our investigation of this somewhat contradictory expression of satisfaction with role, but overall dissatisfaction with the institution, revealed that many staff identify with their specific position and immediate colleagues while disassociating themselves from most other aspects of the university. Satisfaction with one's position, therefore, is found to be closely related to satisfaction with opportunities to exercise special abilities, opportunities for independence, the competence of immediate colleagues, confidence in immediate superiors and the adequacy of both job and social relations with colleagues. Those aspects of the university found disappointing do not appear to intrude on satisfactions at this level. It would seem that staff typically function and find their satisfactions by doing their own thing in an atmosphere of congenial colleagues and remoteness from the remainder of the institution.

The seeking of a sphere of relatively autonomous activity where it is more possible to control outcomes and minimize the frustrations of "the system" undoubtedly results in what we observe as a tendency for staff withdrawal and isolation. Staff, however, may also be influenced in this behavior by their feeling blocked in efforts to participate more fully in university life. They feel, for example, excluded from campus governance and generally powerless to exert influence on the institution and in some cases their own department. Staff also appear to be withdrawn from the cultural, intellectual life of the university. In their leisure time activity staff reveal little disposition for social diversions other than playing a sport. Major recreations reported are reading a novel or seeing a movie. Over half of the staff seldom or never attend a local town meeting, act in a play, attend an athletic event, paint, draw, sculpt or play a musical instrument. Staff seldom interact with students, faculty or administrators, other than close colleagues, except on job related issues. Interestingly, however, while staff report a reasonable amount of discussion with each other on "overall institutional objectives or current educational trends and issues," staff still indicate they are only occasionally stimulated by colleagues in their intellectual and esthetic interests. Further many staff report that

they find very few people at Stony Brook with whom to share their professional interests. The implication is that while staff relations with colleagues are amiable and satisfying, professionally they are somewhat superficial. Staff relations are more nearly those of "allies" who help each other survive in an alien and at times hostile land.

In looking at Stony Brook student affairs operations with a broad perspective we are struck by the rigidity of the formal university administrative structure contrasted to the sense of individual independence found in actual staff functioning. The formal structure of the organization reflects a traditional hierarchical pyramid. Authority is centralized; however, there is insufficient communication on goal or policy issues between policy makers and staff. The evident isolation of the formal leadership from service operations threatens to lead to increasingly divergent staff activity and ultimately to breakdowns within the system. Similarly it is not always clear to staff where the real authority for policies governing particular offices resides and to whom they are in fact accountable. This lack of communication and confused sense of structure is reflected in much of our data. Staff, as do faculty, agree that the educational policies of Stony Brook are not clear to them. Staff (and faculty) also report little opportunity to participate in the challenge of shaping a new university. Staff indicate they seldom discuss overall institutional objectives with institutional policy makers. The mutual isolation of policy makers from operational personnel seems to have led to the creation of many autonomous clusters of campus activity in the pursuit of independently determined, albeit presumably useful, objectives. These clusters, however, have not established the essential organizational links needed to be integrated with specific institutional purposes and programs. In effect we find two organizations, the putative formal authority structure and the actual operational service system, neither of which appears to function consistently with a clear understanding or interest in the other.

Educational Policy and Staff Attitudes

Organizational effectiveness frequently is found to be closely related to the loyalty of employees to program goals. This is achieved minimally in most institutions by satisfying employees' basic needs for survival, security and belonging. In some complex professional organizations, such as a university, in order to obtain cooperation from a staff with diffused loyalties their higher order psychosocial needs must be met to bring about greater staff identification with organizational goals. Examination of Stony Brook staff attitudes toward institutional values serves to deepen our understanding of staff organizational behavior.

Overall staff would prefer a larger, more social role for the university than they find reflected in institutional policy and programs. Education is seen by staff as a vehicle to help individuals move from one life phase to another. For this reason continuing education is regarded as an important university service that needs more emphasis and expansion at Stony Brook to provide adults with a better opportunity for stimulation, renewal and growth. Quite likely the important developmental and social role staff assign to education reflects the value placed on education in their own families and early lives. Therefore, unlike most faculty who consider transmission of knowledge the major university objective, staff find the university's purpose in furthering human growth and providing service to meet social needs.

Undergraduate education, staff feel, should provide for broad, liberal academic study and personal development as well as preparation for more specialized advanced study. Staff indicate a conviction that at the undergraduate level personal development is at least as important as formal academic study and that in a proper curriculum these two learning dimensions should be coordinated. At Stony Brook staff are satisfied that the academic program is sufficiently broad and liberal. Comprehensive services to meet student personal needs, however, are believed inadequate. Some improvement it is felt, could result by providing more opportunities for students to enroll in small seminars and independent study, permitting greater student autonomy in academic choices, and increasing student participation in the formulation of academic policies. Further modification of "standards," however, such as pass/no credit, is not seen as particularly desirable.

Staff attitudes toward some existing formal academic policies are similar to the feelings of the academic faculty. Staff support the present practice of selective freshmen admissions. They would like to see freshmen and community college graduate admission criteria brought closer together, however, by reducing the standard for freshmen while increasing it for community college graduates. This implies disagreement with the current free access community college transfer policy. Considering the recent shift of university admissions policy to guarantee upper division enrollment to community college graduates and the important role staff play in helping transfer students through this transition process, it would seem useful for institutional leaders to discuss fully with the staff the purpose and implications of this policy. Given the basic educational orientation of most staff support for an elitist admissions policy suggests an inconsistency in need of examination. Discussion might help both staff and the institution understand how to resolve differences on this issue to the benefit of community college transfers and themselves.

Professional Staff Roles

We find in our examination of how staff distribute their working time that there are two distinct groups within the staff, administrators and student helpers, each with a characteristic role. The larger group, representing a little more than two-thirds of the staff studied by us (and all of the leadership), primarily perform in the administrative services, typically eighty percent or more of their time, and give little time to helping students directly, generally ten percent or less of their time. This group while "student-orientated" in a general sense think of themselves as administrators and prefer to put time in administrative functions. This predominant administrative emphasis by staff at Stony Brook differs with a national study that found only about one-quarter of those in student affairs are engaged in administrative activity while the majority are involved in social and inter-personal service.

The administrative student affairs group although generally satisfied with the allocation of their time would like to see some modifications. None think that more of their time should be given to helping students directly; half would reduce their helping. The most significant change most administrators seek, however, is a reduction in the time spent on supervision of day to day operations and an increase in time given to planning new programs or modifications of existing programs. The expression of this strong preference for more planning and less management corresponds to a desire to devote a modest portion of their time to formal teaching roles. These different interests relate to a wish to utilize special skills, to be identified as peers of faculty and to have sufficient influence within the campus to improve those systems where inadequacies can create crises requiring massive "crash" responses and lowered campus morale. The desire by administrative staff to move away from a crisis management environment towards a more stable, better thought-out operation that builds confidence in the capabilities of the institution, points to the way at least a majority of staff feel they can make a significant contribution to the university while asserting a more satisfying role for themselves. Staff often express frustration over the difficulty of making things work at Stony Brook. There is a sense of being overwhelmed and overworked trying to cope with a bewildering and at times treacherously unpredictable envornnment. Staff yearn for improvements in this aspect of campus life.

Several factors appear to contribute to the emphasis on administrative activity by many student affairs staff members. The most powerful influences may be (1) a belief that the institution prefers staff to give priority to institutional needs over those of students and (2) a sense of inadequacy in being able to help students, particularly those with personal problems. Staff are quite clear about the institutional reward system. Almost all agree that there is considerable pressure to meet institutional needs apart from student needs and little institutional pressure to meet student needs. Promotional opportunities, a sore point for most staff, usually

are given to male members of the administrative group. Those with ambition to get ahead at Stony Brook are under no illusions as to what behaviors are favored. The fact that a significant number of staff also act somewhat independently probably reflects their lowered susceptability to institutional influence (most expect to leave by 1975), satisfactions found in direct helping situations with students and the consequences of withdrawal and isolation.

The remaining portion of the student affairs staff (about one-third) are the "helping" group. Unlike the administrators helpers seek to minimize organizational involvement and to maximize time available for student helping. How "helpers" allocate their effort is quite flexible and appears as often self-determined as organizationally defined. Even in some operations where duties would seem to be defined by the nature of the function (e.g., in the case of Residential Advisers where one would expect service to be focused on resident students) the allocation of time among duties and the character of duties appear to be greatly influenced by individual preferences, often including activities outside the expected service area. Helping staff report little interaction about their duties or university goals with institutional leaders or, even with their own immediate supervisers. Helping staff find considerable satisfaction in this "style" and report that they enjoy the opportunities at Stony Brook for independence, innovation and the exercise of their professional judgement. Nevertheless, given the tendency toward isolation discussed earlier and the evidence of poor communication, philosophical differences and unsatisfied professional identity aspirations, it is reasonable to question how effective the sum of these self-determined efforts are and how well they are coordinated and made compatible with overall departmental and institutional responsibilities to all students.

Three characteristics describe "helpers," (1) a feeling of competence in the helping situation, (2) frequent informal contact with students and (3) not feeling intimidated by traditional "taboos" (such as that only teaching faculty are capable of providing academic advisement). Helping staff feel competent in most helping situations, particularly with students on personal matters. Surveys and interviews with students conducted by the Research Group have shown the importance to students of prior personal contact with staff, preferably social, as a determining factor in seeking out specific staff members for formal helping. This finding is supported by evidence that those staff who report the most informal social contact with students also are those reporting the greatest volume of helping. Staff-student exposure outside formal institutional roles and opportunities of seeing each other in more personal relationships appears to be a useful way to reduce social distance and to increase the giving and receiving of help.

Administrative staff, who help less overall and feel much less comfortable about helping, normally limit themselves to information giving and general discussion of intellectual or academic matters. Administrative staff, however, have

little other than formal, functional contacts with students. Administrative staff report that during the two month period preceding completion of the survey on average they talked with about three students each on matters involving their staff duties and more general questions involving institutional objectives or educational issues. Similarly these staff infrequently invite students to their home, rarely seek student criticism of their work, seldom speak before student groups, and get little if any student help in planning their work. These staff, despite their interest in student welfare, tend to keep some distance between themselves and students. This social distance seems to contribute to students having an unclear image of some student affairs staff, increases their isolation and interferes with the development of a more satisfying sense of community.

Student affairs staff at Stony Brook appear to be caught in a frustrating labyrinth constructed in part by the developing aspirations of the student affairs profession itself and in part by the inadequate coordination of local student affairs programs and individual professional preferences with institutional objectives. They can find little among themselves, in the institution's leadership (including the faculty), or its organization to help them toward a resolution of their dilemma. In their frustration many turn away from a deeper response to the challenge of their work, perpetuating both their powerlessness and the myths used to justify their behavior. They like their work and believe that Stony Brook can be an important educational resource. Virtually all, nevertheless, have little hope that change can come soon enough for them. Only a handful of staff, those nearing retirement or others committed to the area for reasons outside the university, expect still to be at Stony Brook in 1975.

We can understand the frustration and alienation of many in the student affairs staff. It is shared by colleagues in other institutions, although this does not reduce the anguish. We find in our investigation, however, many elements that give us hope. There is, for example, a clear reservoir of belief in the value of student services among students and faculty despite their criticism of specific programs. As a result we are encouraged to offer the following suggestions intended to help the Stony Brook student affairs program move toward that quality of performance that would secure for it the support and approval sought.

Recommendations

The following suggestions are intended to contribute to improvements in areas such as organization, staff isolation, communication, staff recruitment and development, understanding of student affairs, and the definition of purpose. We recommend (1) that there be a careful review of the goals, organization and functions of student affairs. Normally organizations are set up to implement objectives, establish authority and accountability, assure necessary communication

and provide satisfactions for its members. Our study suggests that few of these qualities exist at Stony Brook. Staff say that they are not sure what the university's goals are, nor what is expected of them in their jobs. Communication within the system is low. Most staff report that they decide for themselves what they do and how. It is evident that clarification of these issues would help student affairs become a more focused and effective program.

In undertaking a further study of student affairs organization we urge close attention be given (a) identification of goals and purposes for each program and unit, and (b) clarification of the sources of responsibility for policy making for each operating group. For example, what offices or individuals determine policies and their implementation for offices such as the registrar, admissions and the Stony Brook Union? Our sense is that operational structure and policy control are not articulated with enough clarity to assure unambiguous lines of authority and accountability; (c) identify staffs and offices that perform similar or closely related functions, such as advising. Are the divisions of labor sensible? How is coordination assured?

We recommend (2) that the division between administrative student services staff and the helping-developmental services staff be recognized explicitly by the creation of a distinct helping-developmental unit with leadership and resources separate from the administrative units. In addition we propose that this helping-developmental unit be developed along the lines of a community organization model with a program, policy and assessment body comprised of professional staff as well as faculty and student "consumers." Further we urge that this helping-developmental unit include among its primary objectives the establishment of a close working relationship between academic and non-academic programs and staffs to assure the coordination and, wherever possible, the integration of efforts. Among these mechanisms we suggest, as an early collaborative effort, a problem centered workshop on career planning and the development of vocational information related to particular academic concentrations.

Until staffing permits an increased scale of operations we recommend (3) that the student affairs developmental effort give high priority to new students: freshmen and transfers. Our sense is that the current ratio of students to staff is sufficiently intimidating to staff to cause them to question if they can provide responsible service to students generally. Emphasizing professional efforts on new students would provide a somewhat more manageable scale and also establish a sufficiently concise time frame for effective evaluation and feed back. If students are helped constructively in the early stages of their time at Stony Brook this effort should reduce dilemmas requiring helping later on. Further, some of the early developmental efforts could be directed toward improved peer helping practices and skills among students, and more involvement of faculty and other staff, so that over time considerably improved self, peer and community resources and helping values can be built into the campus culture itself.

Our studies of students show that they want and need the services student affairs would like to offer. Studies of the faculty indicate that they believe comprehensive developmental services should be provided students by specially trained professionals. Given these attitudes we can only speculate that the limited development of these programs at Stony Brook reflects a failure on the part of student affairs to obtain the resources and support needed to assume these functions. We recommend, therefore, (4) that a program to promote understanding and confidence in student affairs be undertaken at once. We suggest that the following activities would be useful in helping familiarize faculty and students with the interests and capabilities of student affairs: (a) published reports at the start of each semester describing the past term's activities and projecting the next term's program; (b) articles to **Statesman** and other campus media describing particular programs and giving profiles of involved staff members; (c) increased staff participation on WUSB programs such as "Town Hall"; (d) departmental open houses and coffee hours; (e) establishment of faculty and student teams to help in evaluating and planning programs; (f) opening staff meetings to faculty and students with minutes circulated to all interested; (g) provision of more internships for students in student affairs offices; (h) sponsorship of regional and other gatherings of student affairs professionals and encouragement for faculty and student attendance; (i) publicizing the professional activities of staff members; (j) asking faculty to teach in staff development programs; (k) encouragement of each staff member to seek out new faculty and students continually in order to talk with them and acquaint them about student affairs services.

Staff meetings often set the tone for staff communications. We urge (5) that unit heads review their use of staff meetings to determine if they might be utilized more creatively. Our observation is that staff meetings at Stony Brook and elsewhere are vastly underused opportunities that infrequently become more than sterile "show and tell" sessions. If staff find they are seldom intellectually or professionally stimulated by one another (a finding in our study), the staff meeting is a good place to start to alter this situation.

We recommend (6) that staff be assisted to acquire a more cosmopolitan professional view. Our study shows that Stony Brook student affairs professional staff are not particularly interested in gaining recognition from colleagues outside of Stony Brook. Staff also report that they are not stimulated intellectually or professionally by Stony Brook colleagues. These factors combined with the relatively low level of professional preparation of most staff when they first come to Stony Brook suggest strongly that staff need to be stimulated to improve their sense of professionalism. We suggest the following as some ways to encourage staff to broaden their view. (a) The development of communications with counterparts in the region and within the SUNY system. This program could range from exchanging program and job descriptions to joint workshops, intervisitations and actual exchanges of staff for a semester or more. (b) The creation of a practical leave policy

for professional growth. A first step could be to enable staff to take extended study leaves (with pay) during the summer. A system of accruing overtime credits might make this readily feasible. Priority for such opportunities should be given staff in their first few years of service. Longer-term staff might be assisted in obtaining sabbaticals. Virtually no member of the student affairs staff has ever received a sabbatical. (c) A library of journals, newsletters and reports should be established and become the focus for periodic staff discussions. Especially information on workshops, institutes and other such programs should be circulated.

In an earlier report we discussed the value of non-punitive, constructive teacher evaluation programs. We think regular "consumer" feedback on student affairs services would be equally useful. We note that there is no systematic program of evaluation now and, consequently, were not surprised to find that staff only occasionally sought student criticism of their work. We urge (7) the development of a comprehensive feedback system utilizing students, faculty and outside consultants.

We recommend (8) that student affairs recognize the potential of faculty as allies in improving student services by offering to help interested faculty become more effective helpers. Our studies show that many faculty would be interested in this opportunity. We suggest that a variety of models be attempted in an effort to create new staff-faculty relationships; for example, team teaching in which a staff member would help faculty deal with the non-cognitive aspects of the teaching-learning process. Possibly, too, if there were more staff teaching opportunities, such as in the freshman seminar program, staff then could involve faculty as helpers in the planning and conduct of these courses.

In the areas of staff recruitment, selection and professional development we recommend that Stony Brook (9) revise its student affairs personnel policies and practices with a mind toward building a staff rather than simply filling positions. The evidence suggests that few staff are specifically recruited to strengthen a department by increasing the diversity of professional knowledge and experience available, as is the case with faculty, and that little consideration is given to the future professional development and potential contributions of staff members. We suggest that this laissez-faire staffing pattern be replaced by a more deliberate program of staff recruitment designed to introduce a wider range of knowledge, training, and experience to the student affairs staff. One way this could be accomplished is to ask each department to prepare descriptions of the kinds of skills that would strengthen the department and provide talent rosters of individuals they feel would meet these qualifications. Given this kind of planning it should be possible to use staff lines more constructively as well as to influence the allocation of university lines for both staff enrichment and program needs.

(10) Staff also express concern regarding opportunities for promotion and the fairness of staff evaluation. We recommended that the current selection and promotion practices be reconsidered and altered to permit greater involvement by

staff members. It is urged that all vacancies and new positions be announced to the staff together with an invitation for applications or recommendations from interested staff. A staff appointments advisory committee should be established to assist in screening candidates. The staff should be fully consulted regarding appointments, especially those to leadership positions, as well as reorganization of staff functions. Making arbitrary appointments and organizational adjustments without adequate prior counsultation are factors that can contribute to situations such as the level of dissatisfaction and isolation found among Stony Brook staff.

(11) Since most staff are neither trained nor experienced in student affairs work nor in the functions for which they are first hired, we strongly recommend that a comprehensive staff development program be made an integral part of the student affairs personnel program. If the nature of budget support for student affairs at Stony Brook continues to mandate that most new staff be hired at or near entry salary level, a staff development program becomes crucial. It would help mitigate the inherent deficiencies of this support policy, while contributing to improvements in staff operations, professional communications and overall sense of competence. Increased confidence within the staff we believe will greatly improve their initiative in undertaking useful relationships with faculty and increased service to students.

(12) Finally, we recommend that the university provide career assistance to professional staff as part of its student affairs personnel program. Such assistance, in addition to routine announcements of campus employment and educational opportunities, would include study opportunities, career assessment, assistance and planning, listings of job openings elsewhere and support for involvement in professional organizations.

Conclusion

Our purpose in this as in other reports has been to be constructive and direct in an effort to help make the university a more viable environment for learning and growing. We have found much in student affairs in need of repair, but also found much about which to be positive and hopeful. We found individuals motivated to care and to give and who, despite evidence of frustration and despair, still show the courage to try. These individuals, however, are in need of the leadership, the opportunity to develop their skills and the involvement in the university that will transform their individual potentials into a staff of professionals. The need at Stony Brook for a quality of caring in its operations has been made abundantly evident in reports of students, faculty and student affairs staff. A student affairs staff of confident, adequately prepared professionals, can become effective partners with the faculty and students in creation of a well functioning human community. We have spoken in earlier reports of the need for creating a new social synthesis and encouraging the development of indigenous campus leadership as challenges for Stony Brook. Establishing a concern for human values and growth through improved services to students, we feel, is an essential step in meeting these challenges.